

Trump using 'immense federal power' to try and seize voter registration info to 'undermine' elections, states say

CHRIS PEREZ | Sep 17th, 2025, 5:

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Then-candidate Donald Trump arrives at Manhattan Criminal Court in New York, Thursday, May 9, 2024. (Angela Weiss/Pool Photo via AP).

The [Trump administration](#) is using its "immense federal power" to go after the president's "political opponents" in [Maine](#) and [Oregon](#) with two new lawsuits to try to seize voter registration information to "undermine our elections," according to local officials.

"This is not normal," said Maine Secretary of State Shenna Bellows in a [statement](#) Wednesday. "Trump's DOJ is using its immense federal power to try to intimidate us into turning over protected voter data and changing our voting processes to fit President Trump's whims," Bellows blasted. "We're not backing down because we know our

hardworking state and local election officials run excellent elections here."

The Department of Justice filed two separate complaints in Maine and Oregon on Tuesday, saying the litigation was warranted due to the states' alleged failure to provide information regarding "voter list maintenance procedures" and electronic copies of statewide voter registration lists, according to a DOJ [press release](#).

"States simply cannot pick and choose which federal laws they will comply with, including our voting laws, which ensure that all American citizens have equal access to the ballot in federal elections," said Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon of the DOJ's Civil Rights Division. "American citizens have a right to feel confident in the integrity of our electoral process, and the refusal of certain states to protect their citizens against vote dilution will result in legal consequences," Dhillon charged.

The lawsuit against Oregon alleges that the Beaver State and its officials violated the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and the Civil Rights Act of 1960 (CRA) by "refusing to produce" the current unredacted electronic copy of the state's voter registration list. The Trump administration also accused Oregon of failing to provide information on the state's voter list maintenance program and a refusal to disclose registration information for "any ineligible voters."

The lawsuit against Maine alleges that the Pine Tree State and its officials also violated the NVRA, HAVA, and CRA by refusing to provide data regarding the removal of "ineligible individuals" and an "unredacted, computerized state voter registration list."

Both Oregon and Maine have allegedly denied the requests for local voter info.

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"To prevent fraudulent votes from being cast, federal law requires that States conduct routine list maintenance procedures of their statewide voter registration databases," DOJ lawyers said in the Oregon

complaint. "Accurate voter rolls prevent the opportunity for fraud in federal elections," they argued. "The Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice is tasked with ensuring that States conduct voter registration list maintenance to prevent the inclusion of ineligible voters on any State's voter registration list."

In the Maine complaint, the DOJ described how Maine is a member of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), an organization that it says is comprised of states whose "mission" is to "assist states in improving the accuracy of America's voter rolls and increasing access to voter registration for all eligible citizens."

The complaint accuses Maine of providing "the identical information" that the DOJ has requested to ERIC, a private organization, "which lacks any enforcement authority, yet refuses to adhere to federal law and provide that same information to the Attorney General of the United States."

Both states, according to the DOJ, have failed to provide "sufficient responses" and information that the Trump administration says is "necessary" for the attorney general to determine if Maine is conducting "a general program that makes a reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters from the official lists of eligible voters."

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